



December 19, 2003

Indictment charges firearms offenses in theft of guns in Woonsocket

A federal grand jury has charged **Leo Bergeron** with federal firearms offenses in connection with the theft of five guns in Woonsocket in April. Bergeron was arrested in June in Woonsocket following a two-month investigation by Woonsocket Police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

The Office of the United States Attorney, Monty J. Monteiro, Resident Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and Woonsocket Police Chief William Shea jointly announced a two-count indictment, which the grand jury returned on December 17 in U.S. District Court, Providence.

The indictment charges Bergeron with being a felon in possession of five guns: a Norinco SKS, two AR15 semi-automatic rifles, a .40 caliber pistol and a .22 caliber rifle. It also charges Bergeron with being in possession of stolen guns. A Woonsocket resident reported to Woonsocket Police in April that the five guns had been stolen from his gun safe.

Bergeron, 23, whose address is unknown, is held on state charges at the Rhode Island Adult Correctional Institutions. He is scheduled to be arraigned on the federal indictment in U.S. District Court, Providence, on December 22.

An indictment is merely an allegation and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. Upon conviction, the statutory maximum penalty for each

offense charged in the indictment is ten years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine. Exact sentencing for any defendant convicted would be determined on the basis of federal sentencing guidelines, which take into account such factors as the specific nature and impact of an offense and a defendant's criminal background, if any.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Peter F. Neronha is prosecuting the case for the government.

-30-

Contact: 401-528-5224

E-mail: thomas.connell@usdoj.gov